

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 remain in this application. Claim 1 has been amended.

The Examiner's indication of allowability of claims 3 and 4, if rewritten in independent form, is acknowledged and appreciated.

Claims 1 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maxham in view of Abate and DiPasquale. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited references, alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the high-power amplifier stage connected to at least the second amplifier stage of the base amplifier arrangement and having at least two pump signal sources, as now described in claim 1.

In maintaining the rejection of claims 1 and 8, the Office Action states that the Maxham reference in combination with the DiPasquale reference discloses the claimed first and second amplifier stages of the modular base amplifier arrangement, and that the post amplifier stage 27 of Maxham discloses the claimed high-power amplifier stage. As shown in Fig. 3 of Maxham, the post amplifier stage 27 includes one pump signal source 1480, which is recognized in the Office Action.

Even assuming that the combination of the cited references disclose the modular base amplifier arrangement and the high-power amplifier stage of the present invention, they do not disclose or suggest that the high-power amplifier stage includes at least two pump signal sources, as called for in claim 1. As clearly shown in the Maxham reference, the post amplifier 27 only includes one pump 1480. By adding a high-power amplifier stage having at least two pump signal sources, so that at least three single optical amplifiers are provided, a clear improvement in the amplification power of the entire optical amplifier arrangement is obtained. This is particularly useful when upgrading an optical transmission system in terms of transmission capacity. For these reasons, claims 1 and 8 are allowable over the cited references.

Claims 2, 7 and 9 stand rejected further under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maxham in view of Abate and DiPasquale and further in view of Meli. These claims depend from claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons given with respect to claim 1, and because of the additional features that they recite.


Claims 5-6 stand rejected further under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maxham in view of Abate and DiPasquale and further in view of Sakano. These claims depend

from claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons given with respect to claim 1, and because of the additional features that they recite.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1, as well as claims 2-12 which depend therefrom, are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner should contact Applicant's undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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